Kindly amend the application as follows:

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the fourth paragraph on page 5 of the specification with the following replacement paragraph:*

Figure **4** shows the amino acid sequence (SEQ ID NO: 2) of the novel rice gene which controls a physiological reaction system induced by brassinosteroid hormone, together with characteristic sequences found therein (where nuclear localization signals and an ATP/GTP binding motif can be observed).

Please replace the second paragraph on page 12 of the specification with the following replacement paragraph:

(Example 5: Structural analysis of the causative gene)

Using the sequence obtained according to Example 2 as a probe, the corresponding cDNA and genomic clone were obtained from a cDNA library and a genomic library. Their structures are shown in SEQ ID Nos: 1 and 3. It was learned that this gene includes 6 exons and 5 introns, encoding 1057 amino acids, and that Tos17 had been inserted at the 4th and 5th exons in two mutants, respectively.

* Applicants enclose herewith marked up copy of these specification paragraphs and the claims indicating the amendments in this response.

Moreover, motif search results suggested the presence of nuclear localization signal 1 (amino acid residues 329-367 of SEQ ID NO: 2, Robbins & Dingwall consensus sequence; a search result by PSORT program) and nuclear localization signal 2 (amino acid residues 457-460, 595-600 of SEQ ID NO: 2, 4 amino acid nuclear localization pattern signal; a search result by PSORT program) as well as the presence of an ATP/GTP binding domain (amino acid residues 526-533 of SEQ ID NO: 2; a search result by a motif search service on Genomenet). Thus, the possibility of this gene being involved in signal transduction was suggested (Figure **4**).

IN THE CLAIMS

Please replace claims 1-3 with rewritten claims 1-3 as follows:

1. (Amended) An isolated polynucleotide encoding a plant polypeptide which controls a signal transduction system for brassinosteroid hormone, the polynucleotide encoding an amino acid sequence from Met at position 1 to Arg at position 1057 of SEQ ID NO: 2 in the SEQUENCE LISTING, including any polynucleotide encoding an amino acid sequence with at least 80% homology to SEQ ID NO: 2.

2. (Amended) The isolated polynucleotide according to claim 1 derived from rice.